Matrix and Embedding Contexts:
Semantic and Pragmatic Issues

SoSe 2020

Syllabus

ORIGINAL COURSE DESCRIPTION
This advanced seminar examines several semantic and pragmatic effects arising in matrix environments and/or in embedding contexts, investigates their form-to-meaning mapping and seeks to establish correlations between them. At the matrix level, we will examine *wh*-questions (exhaustivity of the question and of the *wh*-phrase), alternative questions, polar questions and non-canonical questions like biased questions, rising declaratives and tag questions. At the embedded level, we will investigate the semantics of attitude verbs and modals, embedding puzzles (selection of indicative vs. subjunctive, *surprise*+AltQ/PolQ, *realize*+AltQ/PolQ and *admit*+*if*-PolQ) and the distribution of German discourse particles (e.g., *schon, denn, bloss*) in embedded environments.
.

INSTRUCTOR: Prof. Maribel Romero (short for María Isabel Romero Sangüesa)
maribel.romero@uni-konstanz.de
G222
Office hours: Thursdays 11:30-12:30h

COURSE PREREQUISITES
Knowlegde of Formal Semantics at least equivalent to Ling215.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
- Possibly some practice exercises
- Class presentation of a paper
- Term paper: presented at our Mini-Conference on the last session of the semester and written up and handed in by September 1.

OUTLINE OF THE COURSE

ON THE MEANING OF MODALS AND ATTITUDE VERBS

- Traditional approaches: Hintikka-style vs. Stalnaker-Heim-style
- Degree-based approaches
- Free choice effects of disjunction under modals and attitude verbs
- Decomposing layers of modality
- Decomposing factivity

Bar-Lev, M. & D. Fox. 2017. Universal free choice and innocent inclusion. In *SALT 27.*

Bogal-Allbritten. E. 2016. *Building Meaning in Navajo*. PhD thesis, UMass Amherst.

Djärv K. 2019. *Factive and Assertive Attitude Reports.* PhD thesis, University of Pennsylvania.

Heim, I. 1992. Presupposition Projection and the Semantics of Attitude Verbs. *Journal of Semantics 9*: 183-221.

Kratzer, A. 1991. Modality. In A. von Stechow & D. Wunderlich, eds., *Semantik: Ein internationales Handbuch der zeitgenössischen Forschung*. Gruyter. Berlin. 639–50.

Lassiter, D. 2015. Epistemic comparison, models of uncertainty, and the disjunction puzzle. *Journal of Semantics 32:* 649–684.

Mocnik, M. & R. Abramovitz. 2019. A variable-force variable-flavor attitude verb in Koryak. *Proceedings of AC 2019.*

Santorio, P. & J. Romoli. 2017. Probability and implicatures: A unified account of the scalar effects of disjunction under modals. *Semantics and Pragmatics* 10: 1-54.

Villalta, E. 2008. Mood and gradability: an investigation of subjunctive mood in Spanish. *Linguistics & Philosophy 31*: 467–522.

Yalcin, S. 2010. Probability operators. *Philosophy Compass* 5: 916–937.

INTERROGATIVE AND DECLARATIVE COMPLEMENT CLAUSES

- Embedding verbs and exhaustivity of wh-interrogatives
- Finiteness: finite vs. infinitival
- Matrix clause effects in complement clauses. Factive islands.

Cremers, A. and E. Chemla. 2016. Experiments on the acceptability and possible readings of questions embedded under emotive-factives. *JoSem 33*: 49–85.

Djärv K. (2019) Factive and Assertive Attitude Reports: Challenges from the Interface. In Katherine Blake and Forrest Davis (eds.) *Proceedings of SALT 29.*

Farkas, D. 1988. On obligatory control. *L&P 11*:27-58.

Green, J.J. 2016. Control of local and remote rationale clauses.

Guerzoni, E. 2007. Weak Exhaustivity and *Whether*: A Pragmatic Approach. In *Proceedings of SALT XVII*, pp. 112-129.

Klinedinst, N and D. Rothschild. 2011. Exhaustivity in questions with non-factives. *Semantics and Pragmatics* 4: 1-23.

Roelofsen, F. 2019. Surprise for Lauri Karttunen. In C. Condoravdi & T. H. King., eds., *Tokens of Meaning: Papers in Honor of Lauri Karttunen*. CSLI Publications.

Romero, M. 2015. *Surprise*-predicates, strong exhaustivity and alternative questions. In *Proceedings of SALT 25,* pp. 225–245

FOCUS IN (MATRIX) QUESTIONS

- Background on Focus
- Focus in *or-not*-AltQs
- Focus in WhQ and AltQs
- Focus and particles in PolQ and/or Tag-questions

Beltrama, A., E. Meertens & M. Romero. 2018. Decomposing cornering effects: An experimental study. In U. Sauerland and S. Solt, eds., *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung 22*, pp. 175-190.

Biezma, M. 2009. Alternative vs polar questions: The cornering effect. In *Proceedings of SALT 19*.

Bolinger, Dwight. 1978. Yes-no questions are not alternative questions. In H. Hiz (ed.), *Questions*, 87-105. Dordrecht: Reidel.

Cable, Seth. 2010. *The Grammar of Q: Q-particles, Wh-movement, and pied-piping.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Farkas, D. & F. Roelofsen. 2017. Division of labor in the interpretation of declaratives and interrogatives. *JoSem* 34: 237–289.

Krifka, M. 2006. Association with focus phrases. In V. Molnar & S. Winkler, eds., *The Architecture of Focus*, Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2006, 105-136.

Meertens, E. 2019. How prosody disambiguates between Alternative and Polar Questions. In *Proceedings of the 22nd Amsterdam Colloquium*, pages 299-308.

Meertens, E., S. Egger & M. Romero. 2019. Multiple accent in alternative questions. In *Proceedings of Sinn und Bedeutung*, pp 179-195.

Roelofsen & Farkas

Rooth, M. 1996. Focus. In S. Lappin, ed., *Handbook of contemporary semantic theory*. Blackwell.

Rooth, Matts, 1992. A Theory of Focus Interpretation. *NLS* 1: 75-116.

Romero, Maribel. 1998. *Focus and reconstruction effects in wh-phrases*. Ph.D. thesis, UMass.

Romero, M. & C.-h. Han. 2004. On Negative *Yes/No* Questions, *Linguistics and Philosophy* 27.5: 609-658

OTHER

- More on particles in PolQs
- V2